

Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O R 241110Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8933

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 1640

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IR, PK

SUBJ: VISIT OF SHAH TO PAKISTAN

REF: TEHRAN 1704, 1782 (NOTAL); ISLAMABAD 1574

1. IRANIAN COUNSELOR CALLED THIS MORNING TO TELL US
THAT SHAH WOULD AFTER ALL ARRIVE IN PAKISTAN FEBRUARY
25. VISIT, HE SAID, WOULD BE "PRIVATE ONE" AT
"INVITATION OF PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO".

2. AS WE GOT STORY FROM SOURCES HERE, VISIT HAD
ALMOST GONE OFF TRACK OSTENSIBLY BECAUSE OF PROTOCOL
SNAG STEMMING FROM GOP PRACTICE OF INVITING
STATE VISITORS IN NAME OF PRIME MINISTER RATHER THAN
PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN. UNLIKE OTHERS (E.G. MALAYSIANS,
WHOSE RULER VISITED HERE IN NOVEMBER, AND AUSTRALIANS,
WHOSE GOVERNOR GENERAL IS DUE NEXT MONTH), IRANIANS
HAD BALKED AT THIS. PAKS HAD APPARENTLY EVENTUALLY
AGREED TO PRESIDENTIAL INVITATION ON THIS OCCASION
BUT THEN CAME ACROPPER OF FACT THAT PRESIDENT HIMSELF
WOULD BE IN NEPAL FOR CORONATION AND WOULD NOT BE IN
COUNTRY TO RECEIVE SHAH ON PREVIOUSLY AGREED TO FEBRUARY
25 ARRIVAL DATE. AFTER WHAT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN RATHER
DIFFICULT AND EDGY NEGOTIATIONS OVER PAST FEW DAYS

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INVOLVING PHONE CALLS BETWEEN ST. MORITZ, TEHRAN,

ISLAMABAD, AND LARKANA, AND VISIT TO BHUTTO AT LARKANA
BY IRANIAN AMBASSADOR, VISIT IS NOW ON AGAIN, THOUGH APPARENTLY
IN REVISED FORM.

3. EMBASSY TEHRAN IS IN A BETTER POSITION THAN WE
ARE TO ASSESS WHETHER THIS REPORTED PROTOCOL SNAFU
WAS THE REAL BASIS OF THE PROBLEM OR WHETHER MORE
SUBSTANTIVE CONSIDERATIONS WERE INVOLVED. IT HAS
CERTAINLY OCCURRED TO MANY OBSERVERS HERE THAT
THERE ARE GOOD REASONS WHY THE SHAH SHOULD CHOOSE NOT
TO MAKE AN OFFICIAL OR STATE VISIT TO PAKISTAN AT THIS
TIME. WE NOTE IN THIS CONNECTION THAT EMBASSY
TEHRAN'S REPORTED FEBRUARY 27 DEPARTURE DATE FOR HIM
(TEHRAN 1782) WILL TAKE HIM OUT OF PAKISTAN ON THE
EVE OF THE DAY BHUTTO IS EXPECTED TO SET FOR THE GENERAL
STRIKE HE HAS CALLED TO PROTEST THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN
SHEIKH ABDULLAH AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA. (THE
VISIT AS ORIGINALLY SET WOULD HAVE KEPT THE SHAH HERE
THROUGH THE LIKELY GENERAL STRIKE DAY ITSELF.) MFA
SOURCES HERE ARE STICKING TO THE PROTOCOL STORY,
BUT THEN THEY WOULD NOT NECESSARILY KNOW WHAT THE
IRANIANS HAD IN MIND WHEN THEY BECAME BALKY ON THE
INVITATION ISSUE.

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